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TAGS: SNAR SENV KCRM PTER CO
SUBJECT: NAS MONTHLY REPORT FOR JUNE

SUMMARY

¶11. (SBU) SUMMARY: In June the Government of Colombia (GOC) aerially eradicated 17,953 hectares. The Colombian National Police (CNP) seized 28.3 metric tons of cocaine and coca base, 19.3 metric tons of marijuana, and 22 kilos of heroin. They also captured 26 metric tons of precursor chemicals. END SUMMARY

AERIAL ERADICATION PROGRAM

¶12. (SBU) In June, the aerial eradication program sprayed 17,953 hectares of coca. AT-802s operating from Cumaribo, Saravena/Caucasia and Tumaco sprayed 4,045, 5,666 and 8,242 hectares respectively. This brings the year-to-date total to 71,863 hectares of coca sprayed. The spray campaign in Narino continues to produce good results, especially in the Rio Patia basin. Good weather in Cumaribo also aided this month's results. Eradication aircraft were involved in six hostile fire incidents resulting in twelve impacts. This year there have been 40 hostile fire incidents and 93 impacts.

MANUAL ERADICATION PROGRAM

¶13. (SBU) The GOC wrapped up Phase II of its 2008 manual eradication campaign. During Phase II (April 1 to June 30), the GME program manually eradicated 16,588 hectares of coca - bringing their year-to-date total to 29,553 hectares. Phase II operations were primarily concentrated in "zone one" - Antioquia, Bolivar, Cordoba and Santander - and along the Ecuador border in Putumayo and Narino.

A smaller number of GME groups also operated in Meta and Cauca. Separate from the GME program, the Colombian Army (COLAR) and the CNP conducted manual eradication as part of their normal operations.

Through the end of June, COLAR has eradicated 5,704 hectares of coca, 155 hectares of poppy, and ten hectares of marijuana, and the CNP has eradicated 571 hectares of coca, 102 hectares of poppy, and four hectares of marijuana. Through the end of June a total of 36,099 hectares of illicit crops have manually eradicated. In June, three separate landmine incidents killed two eradicators and one EMCAR security personnel and injured two eradicators and one auxiliary. Through June, nineteen people (eight civilians and eleven security personnel) have died during this year's manual eradication operations, surpassing the sixteen killed during the entire 2007 campaign.

¶14. (SBU) Phase III is scheduled to begin on July 15 and will end in mid-September. The GOC plans to increase the number of GME groups to 274 in Phase III, as compared to 180 in Phase II. The GME's will operate in twelve departments with a coca eradication goal of 44,685 hectares for the period. A reduced number of GME groups will

continue to operate in "zone one" to follow through with President Uribe's order to eradicate 100 percent of the coca in Antioquia. The GOC will also ramp up manual eradication operations in Putumayo and send new GME's to the departments of Choco, Valle de Cauca, Narino, Meta, Vichada, La Guajira and Norte de Santander.

ENVIRONMENTAL

¶5. (SBU) In June, the interagency complaints committee received 38 new claims of alleged spray damage to legal crops. NAS paid approximately \$5,375 USD in final payments to two complainants from Narino. There are currently 987 pending complaints.

¶6. (SBU) On the 18th NAS and GOC officials traveled to Vichada to verify eight alleged complaints of crop damage. Coca was found at all eight sites, and the claims were disallowed.

¶7. (SBU) NAS received a health complaint from Guayacana, Narino alleging that a child may have died as a result of glyphosate exposure caused by the aerial eradication program. A toxicologist from the Colombian National Institute of Health (INS), a forensic doctor, and members of the CNP collected samples for analysis. The results determined that the child died from bronchial pneumonia and not from glyphosate exposure. A second health complaint alleged that eighteen people were sprayed with glyphosate in Putumayo; however, blood and urine samples analyzed found no trace of the chemical in their bodies.

PLAN COLOMBIA HELICOPTER PROGRAM (PCHP)

¶8. (SBU) PCHP aircraft flew a total of 1,029.9 hours. Five hundred fifty missions transported 3,317 passengers and 195,150 pounds of cargo. Aircraft operating from Tumaco, Cumaribro, Barrancabermeja, San Jose, and Tolemaida continued to provide air assaults, air movements, reconnaissance, medical evacuations, and support missions for the COLAR counter-drug (CD) brigade and other vetted units. PCHP accumulated 35.8 hours supporting seven medical evacuation flights that transported twelve people. Year-to-date PCHP aircraft have accumulated 277.2 hours supporting the GOC's manual eradication operations.

¶9. (SBU) In June COLAR aircrew training on the UH-60 and UH-II aircraft continued to be limited due to major unscheduled aircraft repairs and the need to reassign aircraft, usually dedicated to training, for higher priority mission support operations.

¶10. (SBU) On the 26th, the GOC and USG signed an agreement that gives COLAR a no cost loan for eighteen UH-1N helicopters through December of 2008. As part of the handover of the aircraft, PCHP conducted a total inventory of the UH-1N aircraft, parts and equipment.

CNP AIR SERVICE (ARAVI) SUPPORT

¶11. (SBU) ARAVI's NAS-supported fleet flew 2,075 mission hours. The seven UH-60 Black Hawks closed out the month with 214 flight hours. The Bell 212 fleet flew 280 mission hours. The Huey II fleet flew 992 hours. Five of the fleet's aircraft are down for depot maintenance. The DC-3 fleet flew 395 hours. ARAVI awaits delivery of the first C-26 undergoing upgrades of intelligence gathering equipment at factory in the United States. The estimated arrival date is September

INTERDICTION

¶12. (SBU) During June the CNP seized 28.3 metric tons of cocaine HCl and coca base, 19.3 metric tons of marijuana, and 22 kilos of heroin. The CNP also destroyed eleven cocaine HCl labs, 276 coca base labs and captured 26 metric tons of precursor chemicals.

¶13. (SBU) From June 5 to 13 the Tulua airmobile company, operating in Cauca and Narino, destroyed three cocaine HCl labs and 67 coca base labs. During these operations more than four metric tons of cocaine, nearly two metric tons of marijuana, 10.3 metric tons of solid precursors, and 16,709 gallons of liquid precursors were seized. From June 10 to 12 the Bogota jungla airmobile company, operating in Vichada, found a FARC 43rd front weapons cache and destroyed 48 coca base labs that contained 510 kilos of coca base, 7,000 gallons of liquid precursors and 3.9 metric tons of solid precursors. On the 13th, the DIRAN heroin group seized 10.6 kilos of heroin at a road checkpoint in Cali. On the 14th, DIRAN junglas assisted DIJIN in the seizure of 9.5 tons of cocaine in Narino. On the 15th, the Santa Marta jungla company captured 570 kilos of cocaine at a road checkpoint in La Guajira. Between the 14th and 19th, the Bogota airmobile company destroyed 78 coca base labs in Arauca. Junglas also seized another 496 kilos of cocaine at a road checkpoint in La Guajira. Another jungla section located and destroyed 4.2 hectares of poppy in Narino. Preparations are underway for jungla deployment to Uraba as part of Operation Firewall.

¶14. (SBU) On the 7th, forty students graduated from the eight-week long range reconnaissance course. On the 13th, 87 students graduated from the eighteen-week jungla international commando course (including two Peruvians, two Hondurans, two Bolivians, two Belizeans, two Chileans, one Panamanian, one Brazilian and one Mexican). On the 20th, 38 graduated from the 23-week combat medic course.

PORT SECURITY PROGRAM (PSP)

¶15. (SBU) In June DIRAN's Ports and Airports Area (ARPAE) unit seized 278.2 kilos of cocaine at the Port of Cartagena; 29 kilos of cocaine, six kilos of heroin and seven kilos of marijuana at the Port of San Andres; five kilos of cocaine and fourteen kilos of marijuana at the Cali airport; six kilos of cocaine and six kilos of marijuana at Medellin's Rionegro airport; and 45 kilos of cocaine, four kilos of heroin, and twelve kilos of marijuana at the Bogota Airport. NAS assisted NAS-Peru in initiating a thirteen-week canine training program at the CNP canine academy in Facatativa. This training is led by two U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) trainers and two Peruvian trainers. The students include eleven Peruvians and five DIRAN police. In June, DIRAN authorized the creation of a dedicated canine company.

¶16. (SBU) The DIRAN polygraph unit conducted polygraph exams on 43 members of DIRAN. This included support for several internal affairs investigations of ARPAE personnel. Twenty seven passed the exam, thirteen failed and three were inconclusive. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) polygraphists conducted polygraph exams on six DIRAN polygraphists. Three failed and their results have been sent to the ICE polygraph institute for further review and final evaluation.

AIR BRIDGE DENIAL (ABD)

¶17. (SBU) The GOC sorted 5,867 tracks in June of which two were "unknown, assumed suspect" (UAS). Neither was deemed to be a phase I, II, or III event. There were also four missions in support of suppression of illegal maritime traffic (SSIMT). Three of these ended in law enforcement engagements resulting in six arrests and the seizure of four vessels, including one go-fast, along with their cargo of 2.2 metric tons of cocaine.

COLOMBIAN ARMY COUNTERDRUG (CD) BRIGADE

¶18. (SBU) The CD Brigade's long-range surveillance detachment (LRSD) along with its 1st, 2nd, and 3rd battalions continued supporting aerial and manual eradication efforts and conducting interdiction operations from bases in Tumaco, Narino, Barrancabermeja, Santander and Cumaribo, Vichada. In June the Brigade carried out counternarcotics operations against the FARC's

16th and 29th fronts and the Daniel Aldana mobile column. The Brigade secured a total of 12,286 hectares during aerial eradication operations. The Brigade destroyed two HCl labs, 33 coca base labs, seven enemy caches and seized 2.7 metric tons of cocaine, 10 kilos of coca paste, 1,810 gallons of liquid coca, 8,737 gallons of liquid precursors, 3,054 kilos of solid precursors, 14,085 kilos of coca leaf in-process, and 1,018,500 coca seedlings. The Brigade also captured eight FARC terrorists and confiscated a number of weapons, ammunition, explosives along with radios, one motor vehicle, and one boat.

REESTABLISH POLICE PRESENCE PROGRAM (CARABINEROS)

¶19. (SBU) In June, CNP Carabинero (EMCAR) Units captured two drug traffickers and 85 common criminals and seized more than 100 weapons, along with ammunition and explosives. EMCAR Units also captured 188 kilos of cocaine and coca base and 1.5 kilos of marijuana. EMCARs reported destroying 900,000 coca seedlings, eradicated 120 hectares of coca, and captured 15.8 metric tons of precursor chemicals.

BASE SECURITY/ROAD INTERDICTION

¶20. (SBU) On the 16th, 26 students began the month-long base defense course in Apartado, Antioquia. The course will address upgrades, renovations, and emerging security requirements at the antinarcotics base there. The next course will take place in Tumaco, Nарino in September.

¶21. (SBU) The site survey and IDIQ for improvements to the perimeter defense system at the antinarcotics base in San Jose, Guaviare were completed. The project, which entails refurbishing the bunker facilities and replacing the non-repairable bastion walls, will begin shortly.

NAVY TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE UNIT (GRUIN)

¶22. (SBU) Operational highlights for June include the seizure of 1.9 metric tons of cocaine in a joint operation with Colombian Navy (COLNAV), COLAR and COLAF units in the Gulf of Uraba. In an operation on the coast of Cordoba, GRUIN seized 253 kilos of cocaine and arrested six smugglers. In another operation, GRUIN passed along intelligence about a go-fast operation to the Panamanian authorities who captured a go-fast with 980 kilos of cocaine that had evaded COLNAV vessels.

OPERATION FIREWALL

¶23. Preparations continued for "Operation Firewall", a biannual, inter-agency counternarcotics operation along the North Coast. DEA is serving as the lead agency, and other Embassy participants include NAS and MILGP. Colombian participants include the CD Brigade, COLNAV, the Coast Guard, COLAR and various elements of the CNP, including ARAVI and the junglas.

INDIVIDUAL DEMOBILIZATION PROGRAM

¶24. (SBU) The demobilization program continues its labors to increase desertion among narcoterrorist groups. There are multiple publicity efforts in coordination with national institutions such as the Colombian Federation of Coffee Growers to broaden the reach of the program's message. Negotiations with the major national media outlets are being held with the same purpose of reaching all regions of the country and increase demobilization. Campaigns featuring former FARC front leader Elda Nellys Mosquera Garcia, alias "Karina," who turned herself in to GOC security forces in May, will be used to facilitate further demobilizations. The program is working with the "Aqui y Ahora" Foundation to determine the

feasibility of offering psychological services to demobilized individuals.

COMMUNICATIONS

¶25. (SBU) DIRAN installed a single channel radio repeater which will greatly improve communications in and around Cucuta. The Cali WAN project was completed and DIRAN's airport police in Cali are now able to access the CNP intranet.

DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION (DDR)

¶26. (U) OAS-Trust for the Americas (OAS-TA) held a second three-day, NAS-sponsored capacity building training for NGOs working in the areas of drug prevention and treatment. Representatives from eighteen NGOs from ten Colombian departments participated. On the 20th, OAS-TA held part two of a two-part conference for journalists to discuss the media's role in drug prevention. Forty journalists and academics participated.

¶27. (U) To commemorate June 26, the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, NAS co-sponsored a youth drug forum with UNODC and DIRAN. The two-day event brought together approximately 200 young leaders (ages 13-20) from all over Colombia to discuss their respective organizations' prevention methodology and showcase the activities that each organization promotes to achieve a drug-free life. It culminated with a roundtable that included Ambassador Brownfield and the directors of UNODC's Colombia Office and the CNP.

BROWNFIELD